

Sample Telecommute Program Policy

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(Employer's Name) Telecommute Program Policy

(Employer Name) has established a program to examine how telecommuting can contribute to organizational objectives and employee well being. These guidelines offer direction for telecommuters, employees not telecommuting, and management. *This document was adopted from Georgia Clean Air Campaign.*

Purpose

Telecommuting, the practice of working from home or another location on a full or part-time basis, is a work alternative that (Employer Name) offers to some employees when it is advantageous to both (Employer Name) and the employee. Telecommuting is a work place strategy that helps employees balance the demands of their work and personal lives. Telecommuting is not a universal benefit or employee right.

An employee's compensation, benefits, work status, and work responsibilities will not change due to participation in the telecommuting program. Telecommuting employees must comply with all organizational rules, policies and procedures.

Eligibility

Candidates for telecommuting must be a full-time (Employer Name) employee with a history of satisfactory or better job performance ratings. The opportunity to telecommute must be approved by an employee's supervisor, who is ultimately responsible for decisions to continue or discontinue telecommuting by the employee, following appropriate notification to the telecommuter.

Selection of employees to participate in the Telecommuting Program shall be based on specific, written, work related criteria including:

- Employee responsibilities
- Need for, and nature of, interaction with other staff and external clients
- Need for use of specialized equipment
- Availability of other qualified employees on site
- Employee job performance

An employee that is considered for telecommuting must be able to work independently, be a self-starter, and demonstrate skills managing time in a productive manner. An employee must have a satisfactory or better performance level with no record of performance or conduct issues.

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The resources that an employee needs to do his/her job must be easily transportable or available electronically.

The decision to allow an employee to telecommute will be made by the employee's management team.

Eligibility and suitability of employees to participate in telecommuting will vary among departments and business units, depending on the function and responsibilities of the employee. Each department must maintain some minimum complement of employees who work on site at the (Employer Name) office in order to function effectively.

Telecommuting is not an alternative to child or elder care and, when applicable, the telecommuter must make appropriate arrangements for dependent care.

Schedules and Hours

Telecommuting hours may be different from office work hours, however, telecommuters and their supervisors must agree on the designated work hours. A regular telecommuting schedule, including specific days and hours, must be established by the telecommuter and approved by their supervisor. Generally, a telecommuter will spend one to two days working from home with the remainder of the scheduled hours working in his/her office on (Employer's Name) premises. The amount of time the telecommuter is expected to work per day or per pay period will not change due to participation in the telecommuting program.

Overtime hours must be pre-approved in writing by the supervisor. Deviations from the agreed upon schedule must be approved in advance by the supervisor. (Employer Name) policy will be followed for all absences. Telecommuters are responsible for keeping and submitting accurate records of their work hours.

Supervisors retain the right to require a telecommuter to return to (Employer's Name) office on a regularly scheduled telecommuting day should work situations warrant such an action. If a telecommuter is required to return to (Employer's Name) office during regularly scheduled telecommuting days frequently, the supervisor may re-evaluate the compatibility of the telecommuter's position and job responsibilities with respect to teleworking or the specific telecommuting schedule.

Telecommuters are required to account for all time worked in accordance with (Employer's Name) current timekeeping policies. It is the telecommuter's responsibility to submit an accurate accounting of hours worked in a timely manner. If a telecommuter is sick while working at home or uses other

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time off, the telecommuter must report hours actually worked on his/her timesheet and use composite leave for the remainder of the hours. Non-exempt telecommuters may perform overtime work only after receiving approval from their supervisor.

Workspace

Telecommuters must have an appropriate work area in their home that considers ergonomics, equipment, adequate workspace, noise, and interruption factors. The telecommuter's off-site workspace should provide an adequate work area, lighting, telephone service, power and temperature control. Additional requirements may vary, depending on the nature of the work and the equipment needed to perform the work.

(Employer's Name) liability for job-related accidents will continue to exist during the approved work schedule and in the telecommuter's designated work location since the telecommuter's homework space is an extension of (Employer Name) workspace. The designated work location must meet OSHA safety rules for the workplace including: smoke detector; working fire extinguisher; clear, unobstructed exits; removal of hazards that could cause falls; adequate electrical circuitry, and appropriate furniture. If an at-home injury occurs, the telecommuter must notify his/her supervisor immediately and follow (Employer Name) policy for on-the-job injury. The telecommuter must agree to follow common safety practices and provide a safe work area for the employee and others who enter it.

Homeowner's insurance and any changes in rates or coverage are the responsibility of the employee. Any increase in the telecommuter's home utility costs (excluding increased telephone costs) is the responsibility of the employee.

Federal and state statutory abstracts will be posted at the telecommuter's (Employer Name) office location in lieu of posting them in the employee's home office. Telecommuters should review these notices while on (Employer's Name) premises.

Telecommuters should consult their attorney, tax advisor or accountant regarding any legal or tax implications attendant to working at their home or alternative site.

Equipment and Supplies

In most cases telecommuters will provide their own equipment. Telecommuters may use (Employer Name)-owned equipment at their off-site workspace with the prior approval of their supervisor provided that the equipment will be used for (Employer Name) work only and its use by a telecommuter at his/her off-site workspace will not impede the work of employees working at the (Employer Name) office.

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Office supplies will be provided by (Employer Name) and should be obtained during the telecommuter's in-office work period. Out-of-pocket expenses for supplies normally available in the office will not be reimbursed. Telecommuters are responsible for all supplies, equipment, and/or materials provided by (Employer Name). All items remain property of (Employer Name) and may not be used for personal or other than (Employer Name) use.

(Employer Name) will reimburse telecommuters for other business-related expenses, such as long-distance phone calls, shipping costs, etc. that are reasonably incurred in accordance with job responsibilities and approved by the supervisor in accordance with (Employer's Name) regular policies. Appropriate documentation is required if such expenses are submitted for reimbursement.

(Employer Name) does not assume liability for loss, damage or wear of employee owned equipment unless otherwise agreed to in writing prior to the occurrence. Maintenance, repair and replacement of (Employer Name)-owned equipment issued to telecommuter is the responsibility of (Employer Name). In the event of equipment damage or malfunction, the telecommuter must notify his supervisor immediately. (Employer Name) reserves the right to enter the home work area for inspection of the equipment, if necessary. Repairs to employee owned equipment is the responsibility of the telecommuter. In either situation, the telecommuter may be asked to report to the office until the equipment is usable.

Telecommuters must take appropriate action to protect company-provided equipment from damage or theft. (Employer Name) equipment must be returned to (Employer Name) when an employee terminates or discontinues the teleworking arrangement.

Telecommuters that use their own equipment (e.g., fax machine, printer, photocopier) provided that no cost is incurred by (Employer Name). Repair and maintenance of employee-owned equipment is the responsibility of the telecommuter.

Employee Access and Availability

Telecommuters must be available by telephone or email during scheduled hours, with the exception of their scheduled lunch period. Telecommuters are required to have a telephone answering machine or service to ensure availability.

Telecommuters are required to modify their (Employer Name) voicemail announcement to indicate that they may be reached at an alternate number or that the employee will be regularly checking messages. Supervisors may establish that employees are required to check for messages within a certain period (e.g. at least once every two hours).

Telecommuters must keep their supervisor notified of any changes to their home contact information.

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Security

It is the responsibility of the telecommuters to take all precautions necessary to secure proprietary information and to prevent unauthorized access. The telecommuter is required to observe all office security practices when working outside (Employer's Name) office to ensure the integrity and confidentiality of proprietary information. Steps to ensure the protection of proprietary information include, but are not limited to, use of locked file cabinets, disk boxes and desks; regular password maintenance; and any other steps appropriate for the job and the environment.

Telecommuters agree to allow an authorized (Employer Name) representative access to the home work area during prearranged times for business purposes as deemed necessary by the supervisor, including safety inspections, equipment installations and repairs, security assurance, retrieval of (Employer Name) property, and performance evaluations. To ensure hardware and software security, all software used for telecommuting must be approved by the supervisor prior to installation, and only approved bulletin board systems may be contacted. All software used for telecommuting must be virus inspected and each PC must have virus protection software installed. (Employer Name) owned software may not be duplicated unless authorized through the license agreement. Restricted access materials shall not be taken out of the office or accessed through the computer unless approved in advance by the supervisor.

Liability

It is the responsibility of the telecommuters to maintain a safe, professional work site at home that is free from potential safety problems. Telecommuters must certify that their home is free from workplace hazards by completing a safety checklist.

In the case of an injury while working at home, telecommuters must immediately (or as soon as circumstances permit) report the injury to his/her supervisor or the Human Resources Department and request instructions for obtaining medical treatment.

Application Process

Employees wishing to telecommute are required to submit a written request. The employee will complete a Telecommute Selection Survey and provide information concerning job responsibilities, proposed telecommuting schedule, types of work tasks and activities to be performed at the off-site work space, and description of the off-site work space and the equipment required.

Telecommuters will be required to sign a Telecommuting Agreement and complete associated documentation.

Telecommuting arrangements will be on a trial basis for the first three months and may be discontinued at any time, at the request of either the telecommuter or (Employer Name). If a telecommuting arrangement is discontinued by (Employer Name), every effort will be made to provide notice to the employee. However, there may be instances where no notice is possible. Likewise, if an employee elects to discontinue a telecommuting arrangement, the employee should provide notice to his/her supervisor.

Employees that are telecommuting at the time this policy is adopted will be permitted to continue telecommuting. Existing Telecommuters will need to sign the Telecommute Agreement and complete the associated documentation that is required of all telecommuters.

Income Tax

It will be the telecommuter's responsibility to determine any income tax implications of maintaining a home office area. The company will not provide tax guidance nor will the company assume any additional tax liabilities. Employees are encouraged to consult with a qualified tax professional to discuss income tax implications.

Evaluation

Telecommuters will participate in all studies, inquiries, reports and analyses relating to this program. This information is necessary for the (Employer Name) to measure the environmental benefit of the telecommute program.